



Frequently Asked Questions

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Accessibility

What are the ground rules governing accessibility (UBC and State)?

The Uniform Building Code (UBC) covers accessibility, as it applies to buildings in Chapter 11. In 1990, the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law by the President of the United States. This law includes accessibility standards for all new construction and remodeled facilities. The Arizona State Legislature, June 1992, adopted Title III of the ADA and the physical accessibility standards of Title II of the ADA into Arizona law as the Arizonans with Disabilities Act (AzDA) ARS 41-14-92. The Arizona State Attorney General has established building code specifications for enforcing the AzDA. These accessibility rules apply to all new construction and alterations.

Addressing

How do I get an address assigned to my property?

New addresses are assigned only after an applicant comes into the office and applies for a building permit. Addresses in approved subdivisions are assigned as part of the subdivision process.

What considerations are address assignments based on?

In August 1999, the Board of Supervisors adopted the Maricopa County Addressing Regulations. Addresses are assigned according to this document. Primary consideration is given to the needs of emergency service providers for the area and based on the East/West or North/South street-grid alignment.

All easements situated on a North/South grid alignment are given a numbered street. All alignments situated on an East/West grid alignment are given a named street if the access aligns properly with a similar name to the East or West of the property.

What documentation is required to get an address when I apply for my permit?

The following documentation / information is required to be able to assign an address during the building permit process:

- A current recorded deed with the correct legal description;
- The exact parcel number as provided by the Maricopa County Assessor's office;
- A site plan (drawn to scale) indicating the ingress/egress (access) easement on to the property and where the driveway meets the easement; and,
- Indication of the access from the nearest roadway on the site plan.

Will you provide an address for me over the phone so that I can get power turned on to my property?

An address is never assigned over the phone. To get an address for power from a utility company, a permit will need to be obtained (see: **How do I get an address assigned to my property**).

Why is my access easement given a street name when it is a private easement?

Per the Addressing Regulations as approved by the Board of Supervisors in August 1999, street names are assigned based on grid alignments. A private easement situated on the street grid alignment will be named per the Addressing Regulations. (see: **What considerations are address assignments based on**).

Why do I need the exact parcel number for my property and where do I get the parcel number for my property?

We are mandated by A.R.S. 11-321.D to report all building activity on current parcel numbers. Failure to provide an exact parcel – especially when a lot has been split from a larger parcel - can delay the permit process by several weeks and require another trip downtown on your part to correct the error.

If you do not know your current parcel number, you should contact the Maricopa County Assessor's office (602-506-3406) or visit their office at 301 West Jefferson Street, 1st floor.

If your property has been split from a larger parcel you will need to report that split to the Maricopa County Assessor's office prior to applying for a permit. They will assign you a new parcel number, which you will write on your building permit application.

Does the Planning Department provide legal descriptions?

The Planning Department does not provide nor keep records of legal descriptions. In most cases we refer customers to a title company or the Maricopa County Records office.

What is an ingress/egress (access) easement and what are the rules concerning access to properties?

An ingress/egress easement is a recorded agreement between property owners that allows access from one property to another as well as guaranteeing access to emergency service providers, County personnel and any and all public utilities servicing the site. Section 2316 of the Maricopa County Zoning Ordinance states:

“A Zoning Clearance shall not be issued for any building or structure on any lot or parcel unless the owner of the subject lot or parcel guarantees access to Maricopa County personnel and appropriate emergency service providers for the purposes of building inspections, zoning enforcement and the provision of emergency services and any and all public utilities servicing the site. An owner or his agent, by signing an application for a building permit, guarantees such access.”

How do I find out where the access easements are?

Easements on land that is not subdivided land can be created at any time and may be described on the recorded deeds to that property, or may be described in separate recorded legal documents. A title report prepared for a change of title to the property may show easements applicable to the property being sold/acquired. The Maricopa County Records Office may also show easements applicable to the property. However, these may not include Patent Easements, which can be researched at the Bureau of Land Management.

Can I change my address?

Address number changes may be requested by the property owner. Change requests will be granted as long as they are consistent and adhere to the Addressing Regulations of Maricopa County. Changes made at the owner's request because the owner or agent has changed the position of the driveway to another access easement or gave inaccurate information on the original site plan may be subject to fees by the County.

Why did my address change without my request?

Due to the large number of lot splits, addressing that was at one time correct can become "out of alignment" with the new properties. To accommodate the needs of emergency service providers and per Ordinance P-20 Section 103.2 of the Addressing Regulation Ordinance and in accordance with ARS 11-251(31) the address will need to be changed.

Will the county reimburse me for expenses incurred by having to change my address on documents such as checks and stationary?

Maricopa County will not reimburse individuals for address changes. Again, due to the large number of lot splits addresses can and will change to accommodate emergency service providers. Address changes are the normal function of government under ARS 11-251(31).

What should I expect and who gets contacted after my address has changed?

A notification of address change is sent to the property owner. A report is sent every two weeks to the emergency service providers, utility companies, the US Postal Service and any other governmental jurisdictions that may need to know. Although great care is taken to notify these parties and make the transition to the new address as seamless as possible, it is always advisable to contact the post office and utility providers yourself to assure the change is received.

What information do I need to verify my address?

If the property is located in a recorded subdivision, the subdivision name and lot number are necessary. If not in a recorded subdivision, a recorded deed and assessor's parcel number are necessary to verify an existing address.

What procedure is followed to name a street or to change an existing street name?

The Board of Supervisors designates the names of all streets in the unincorporated areas of Maricopa County. Therefore, the street name/name change process must go before the Board of Supervisors at a regular scheduled hearing.

The requestor must submit a completed application and a petition signed by at least 51% of the property owners whose property touches the street or alignment (Copies of both the application and petition are provided by the department) and pay all applicable fees. The fees are not refundable.

After determining the validity of the signatures and that the street name is not used on another alignment within Maricopa County including incorporated cities, the action will be assigned the first available date on the Board of Supervisors agenda. All emergency service as well as public service providers will be notified and given a chance to respond to the request. The hearing dates will be posted along the alignment to be named and legal adds published as per the public hearing laws of the Arizona Revised Statutes. The petition will then be presented to the Board of Supervisors for approval or denial.

The addresses on the alignment will be changed to reflect the correct new street name.

Are there fees for addressing?

Yes, per the Maricopa County Addressing Regulations, the Addressing Official shall charge the following fees for addressing:

\$5 per address for addresses assigned during the subdivision process

\$10 per address for addresses assigned on a dedicated access

\$25 per address for addresses assigned on a private easement

\$50 for an address change requested by a property owner

\$500 for a street name or street name change request

Call the Maricopa County Planning & Development Department "Addressing Information Line" at 602-506-8426 for additional information.

Agricultural Exemptions

What is an agricultural exemption?

The Zoning Ordinances states:

“This Ordinance shall not prevent, restrict or otherwise regulate the use or occupation of land or improvements for railroad, mining, metallurgical, grazing or general agricultural purposes, if the tract/s concerned is/are 5 or more contiguous commercial acres in size (Note: 1 Commercial acre = 35,000 square feet)

- 1) Property is not exempt from the Maricopa County Zoning Ordinance and/or Building Safety Ordinance unless and until the Maricopa Planning and Development Department has issued a certificate of exemption for that property. In order to secure a certificate of exemption, an applicant shall submit a zoning clearance application, including site plan and other reasonable supporting documentation.
- 2) Only property classified by the Maricopa County Assessor's office or the Arizona Department of Revenue as property used for one of the purposes enumerated in the first paragraph of this section is eligible for exemption under this section. If property has been so classified, the property is exempt from the Maricopa County Zoning Ordinance and/or Building Safety Ordinance, unless the Planning and Development Director independently determines that all or part of the property is not used primarily for one or more of the purposes enumerated in the first paragraph of this section.
- 3) Any structures built under an exemption that do not meet the underlying zoning district and/or Building Safety Ordinance standards may be required to comply with said standards if, at a future date, the exemption is no longer applicable.”

Building Codes

What building code is Maricopa County currently using?

2000 International Building Code

Electric?

1999 National Electric Code

Mechanical?

2000 International Mechanical Code

Plumbing?

1994 Uniform Plumbing Code



Check out our Building Code Update link - [Click here](#)

Code Enforcement

What is the procedure for filing a zoning complaint?

Click here to report a zoning violation and learn about our process:
<http://www.maricopa.gov/planning/violation.asp>

Churches, Church Schools

What is the definition of a church?

The Zoning Ordinance does not contain a definition for a “church”. A standard dictionary definition is acceptable. Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate dictionary defines “church” as “A building for public and especially Christian worship.”

When/where is a church allowed?

Churches are permitted in rural and residential zoning districts as well as the C-1, C-2 and C-3 zoning districts.

When is a church school allowed?

Private schools with a curriculum customarily given in public schools, which applies to most church schools, are permitted in any zoning district where a public school is permitted. This includes any rural or residential zoning district and the C-1, C-2, or C-3 zoning districts.

Temporary Power

How do I get electricity during construction of my home/business?

At the time a building permit is being obtained, construction power must be requested. If construction surpasses the rough topout state, construction power will not be issued. Temporary construction power may be secured for a residence at the time of permit application for the residence by mentioning to the building safety counter person that temporary construction power is needed. Once the building permit for the residence is issued, should the applicant need construction power, a “field change” may be issued by the building inspector. In either case, the applicant will receive instruction on setting up a temporary construction service and will be given the appropriate forms to fill out and sign. Temporary construction power for a business is left up to the discretion of the building inspector, since he will be more familiar with the project.

What is the procedure to have electricity turned on?

Once a permit is obtained and a final inspection has been performed, the inspector will direct staff to contact the servicing utility company with a clearance number to initiate this process.

Swimming Pool Requirements

What are the regulations governing private residential swimming pools in Maricopa County?

(Public and semi-public swimming pools are subject to county health codes)

Click on the link provided: [Pool and Pool Barrier Requirements](#)

Home Occupations

Where/when can a business be operated from a residence?

There are two types of home occupation definitions in the Zoning Ordinance:

- 1) Residential home occupations, which are allowed as an accessory use in any rural or residential zoning district, (as defined in Section 202) – “An accessory use of a dwelling that involves very limited manufacture, provision, or sale of goods and/or services. “Garage/yard sales or home parties that are held for the sale of goods or services are not considered a home occupation provided these sales do not exceed six in one year. A residential home occupation is only permitted per the standards contained in the rural and single-family zoning districts. The standards for residential home occupations in rural zoning district are contained in Section 402.12 of the Zoning Ordinance. The standards for single-family residential zoning districts are contained in Section 702.9 of the Zoning Ordinance. The standards for rural and residential zones are different.
- 2) Cottage industries, which are permitted in rural zoning districts subject to obtaining a Special Use Permit, approved by the Board of Supervisors (as defined in Section 202) – “An accessory use of a dwelling that involves limited manufacture, provision or sale of goods and/or services. “Garage/yard sales or home parties held for the sale of goods or services are not considered a cottage industry provided these sales do not exceed six in one year. A cottage industry is a more intense use than a residential home occupation and is only permitted per the standards contained in the special use section in rural zoning districts. The standards for cottage industries are contained in Section 2401.1.ii of the Zoning Ordinance.

What determines if the activity occurring is a business?

The Zoning Ordinance does not list businesses (i.e. commercial activity) as a permitted primary use in rural or residential districts; however, many accessory commercial businesses can be permitted under the residential home occupation definition or the cottage industry definition assuming the required standards dealing with the level of activity and effects on surrounding properties are adhered to.

Inspections

How can I get an inspection?

After a permit is obtained and work is completed according to the schedule on the permit, call (602) 506-3692 one working day prior to the day you would like an inspection.

When will I get an inspection?

Inspections will be conducted within the next working day of leaving a recorded message (e.g., Friday call in; Monday inspection).

What time of day will the inspector arrive?

Due to varying work schedules and staff availability, only general arrival times will be given.

What is needed for a final inspection?

The project is to be completed according to the approved plans. All electrical, plumbing, mechanical, and structural installations must be completed.

Legal Non-Conforming Uses

What is a legal non-conforming use?

The definition for a non-conforming use is located in Section 202 of the Zoning Ordinance and reads as follows: "The lawful use of any building, lot, parcel or tract of land existing at the time this Ordinance, or amendments thereto become effective, which does not conform with the use regulations of the zoning district in which it is located." The ordinance became effective in 1969.

How do you determine if a use is legal non-conforming?

Staff researches legal non-conforming files located in the department to verify or find information on the use on the property. If we have no previous record or substantiation, the owner is required to provide independent third party documentation that the use is non-conforming. A site plan, indicating all uses and structures with setbacks, is also required. The information, when submitted and determined adequate, is retained in files and sorted by address.

Mobile Homes and Manufactured Housing

Where can I place a manufactured home?

Any rural or residential lot in the unincorporated area of the county may be issued a development permit for the placement of one multi-sectional manufactured home built after June 15, 1976. The unit must be on a permanent foundation system, which means either on a slab/stem wall foundation or on a state approved system. Re-roofing, re-siding and structural additions must conform to the Maricopa County Comprehensive Building Code. A single-wide manufactured home may be located on a lot in a rural zoning district subject to a Special Use Permit approved by the Board of Supervisors. Single-wide manufactured homes are also allowed within a mobile subdivision or within a mobile home park. Modular homes (UBC approved) are allowed as a use by right in all rural and residential zoning districts.

What is the procedure for developing a mobile home park?

A Special Use Permit, approved by the Board of Supervisors, is required to develop a mobile home park. This takes approximately four to six months. Additionally, zoning clearances and building permits are also required.

What is the procedure for developing a mobile home subdivision?

A mobile home subdivision requires a Special Use Permit and subdivision approval. These applications can be processed concurrently. Full guarantees for site improvements are also required.

What is the definition of a manufactured home?

A manufactured home, as defined in Section 202 of the Zoning Ordinance is: "A structure, manufactured after June 15, 1976, transportable in one or more sections, which in the traveling mode, is 8 body feet or more in width and 40 body feet or more in length, and when erected on site, is 320 square feet or more in size, and which is built on a permanent chassis and designed to be used as a dwelling with or without a permanent foundation when connected to the required utilities, and includes the plumbing, heating, air conditioning, and electrical systems contained therein. Calculations used to determine the number of square feet in a manufactured home will be based on the exterior dimensions measured at the largest horizontal projections when erected on site. These dimensions will include all expandable rooms, cabinets, and other projections containing interior space, but do not include bay windows. The term "manufactured home" does not include recreational vehicles or factory built buildings (including modular) or mobile homes."

What is the definition of a multi-sectional manufactured home?

A multi-sectional manufactured home, as defined in Section 202 of the Zoning Ordinance is: "

A multi-sectional manufactured home not exceeding two (2) stories in height and manufactured after June 15, 1976, to standards established by the U.S. Department of Housing Urban Development that when joined forms a residence for human occupancy that measures sixteen (16) feet by forty (40) feet or larger and which is designed to be installed on a permanent foundation system when located on an individual lot of record in a rural or residential zoning district. A multi-sectional manufactured home shall have roofing and siding materials similar in appearance and kind to those used in site built homes.”

Where can I put my manufactured home?

A multi-sectional manufactured home can be placed in any location in which a site built home is permitted. All that is needed is a development permit. In addition, a single-wide manufactured/mobile home can be placed on individual rural lots through the Special Use Permit process, in a mobile home subdivision, or in a mobile home park.

How do I contact the State Office that regulates mobile and manufactured homes?

Click the link provided: www.dbfs.state.az.us

Accessory Buildings

What is the definition of an accessory building?

Section 202 of the Zoning Ordinance, defines an accessory building as: “A building or structure which is subordinate to and the use of which is incidental to that of the principal building, structure or use on the same lot.”

What determines if a building is an accessory?

The first criteria is that a lot must have a permitted primary use established (usually a dwelling unit). Next, the proposed accessory building must be clearly incidental to the established primary use (e.g. detached garage, home workshop, etc.)

Where should an accessory building be located on a property?

On any lot, an accessory building can be located at any location that the primary building can be located. In addition to the regular location standards, Section 2303 of the Zoning Ordinance, provides that an accessory building may not be constructed or established on a lot until construction of the principal building has actually commenced or the primary use established. Section 2303 also allows detached accessory buildings to be constructed within the required rear yard, subject to the following requirements:

- a. Accessory buildings cannot occupy more than 30 percent of the required rear yard;
- b. Accessory buildings cannot be closer than three feet to any side or rear property line in the required rear yard, and any projections (i.e., eaves) may not extend more than one foot beyond the walls of the building.

If the accessory building is located in other than the required rear yard, they must meet all applicable setbacks for primary buildings. In a corner lot situation, the detached accessory building can be no closer to the street property line than one half the distance required in the front yard. Finally, if the detached accessory building garage entering an alley, it must be minimum of ten feet from the alley line.

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Recreational Vehicles/Travel Trailer

What is the definition of a recreational vehicle?

Section 202 of the Zoning Ordinance defines a recreational vehicle as “A vehicular or portable unit mounted on a chassis and wheels, designed and constructed to be installed with or without a permanent foundation for human occupancy as a residence, not more than 12 feet in width, nor more than 40 feet in length and containing not more than 400 square feet in total floor area. Total width of said unit including all tip-outs, slide-outs, hinged extensions, or solid frames shall not exceed 12 feet. For purpose of measuring length, the recreation vehicle hitch and/or tongue shall be included. The term recreation vehicle shall include travel trailers, camping trailers, truck campers, and motor homes.”

Where can I park my RV or travel trailer?

Commercial storage yards are available in C-3 Commercial Districts or as approved by the Board of Supervisors as a Special Use Permit within the county. If an RV or travel trailer is parked on private property and stored outside of a garage, it must be placed in the rear yard of the lot, except that placement in other than the rear yard for loading and unloading purposes may be permitted for a period of time not to exceed seventy-two hours (Section 2314.3, of the Zoning Ordinance). It is not legal to store a mobile home on property.

Where can I occupy a travel trailer?

RV/travel trailer parks are permitted in any zoning district subject to obtaining a Special Use Permit approved by the county Board of Supervisors. These parks are developed to particular county zoning, building and health codes, and the residential use of RVs/travel trailers is permitted in these parks. Current county standards also allow the residential use of a travel trailer instead of a mobile home on any mobile home park space or mobile home subdivision lot.

Permits Required

What types of permits are required for the various types of construction or remodeling?

A homeowner's guide to building permitting, Flood Control Clearances, and Zoning Clearances is listed below:

New Structures

Homes, garages, barns, ramadas, sheds, pools, spas and fences.

Additions to Existing Structures

Room additions, expansions, bay windows, covered patios, carports, garages, awnings, fireplaces, and screen rooms.

Alterations to Existing Structures

Remodeling interior/exterior, upgrades, change of roofing material from asphalt to tile, change to type of siding.

Conversions of Existing Structures

Enclosure of carport to garage or room, enclosure of covered patio or lanai into room.

Changes to Existing Mechanical, Plumbing, and/or Electrical Systems

Heating ventilating air-conditioning systems, gas leak repairs and system changes, new gas lines, water heaters, water conditioners, sprinkler systems with bubblers, vacuum breakers and timer for landscaping, sewer repairs and connections, service upgrades, sub-panels, new circuits, repairs and/or replacement of parts.

Repairs Due to Damage

Storm, fire, or physical accident, which cause structural damage and repairs.

Other Miscellaneous Structures

Radio and satellite dish antennas, shade structures, signs and/or temporary structures.

Contact our office at (602) 506-7310 for additional information and requirements.